

The Center of Excellence in Genomics (CEG) for enhancing the utilization of molecular tools in breeding and research

ICRISAT has partnered with the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India, to establish the Center of Excellence in Genomics (CEG) at ICRISAT with financial support from the DBT. The CEG was launched through an exchange of a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) signed by Dr William Dar, Director General of ICRISAT and Dr MK Bhan, Secretary of DBT on 13 December 2006 at a function organized at ICRISAT headquarters at Patancheru, India (*see photo*).

The vision of the CEG is to make it possible for agricultural breeding and research programs initially in India but ultimately in many other parts of the world, to fully utilize modern genome analysis methods. It will achieve this vision by providing high-throughput molecular genotyping and phenotyping technologies to a wide range of Indian public and private research and breeding institutes. Services to be provided by the CEG include:

(1) High-throughput, low-cost, allele detection platforms such as whole-genome profiling using Diversity Array Technology (DArT) analyses, sequencer based SSR (simple sequence repeat) analyses, and allele discovery using TILLING (Targeting Induced Local Lesions in Genome) and EcoTILLING approaches; (2) Access to large-scale field screening for abiotic stresses; (3) Biometrics and bioinformatics support; and (4) Fellowships and training courses for scientists and students from Indian national agricultural research systems (NARS) in the use of high-throughput methods in breeding and research. Further details about the CEG can be found at www.ceg.icrisat.org.

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Launching of CEG at ICRISAT.